

Testimony of Dr. Eric Bernstein
Appropriations Committee
February 22, 2022
UConn, UConn Health and UConn School of Dental Medicine

My name is Eric Bernstein and I am a very proud two-time graduate of the University of Connecticut (BUS '97 and LAW '05). I am also now on the faculty of both the UConn School of Dental Medicine, where I serve as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and the Neag School of Education. I am submitting this testimony in support of the budget requests for the University and for UConn Health.

I could share the statistics about how the School of Dental Medicine fulfills its mission of educating Connecticut citizens and building the dental workforce, advancing the base of knowledge in dental medicine, and providing the highest quality of patient care, and how the Neag School has teachers and leaders in every Connecticut community. Instead, I'd like to share why I'm so deeply grateful for our flagship University and New England's only public dental school.

UConn offers young people and adults of Connecticut a comprehensive academic program that has a demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement. I was an undergraduate during UConn 2000 and I saw the fundamental transformation of the Storrs campus that has continued through today. As faculty at UConn Health, I've seen our state surge as a leader in innovation and discovery through Bioscience Connecticut and the redevelopment of our Farmington campus.

These kinds of incredible investments are the foundation for the opportunities provided to students and community members, as well as an economic engine for the state as a whole. I am grateful for the persistent support of the legislature to ensure adequate funding to allow UConn and UConn Health to continue taking advantage of these incredible infrastructure and capital commitments.

I have seen the impact our School has on the health and well-being of individuals and communities and am proud to be associated with a cadre of scholars, scientists and educators committed to discovery and innovation and to ensuring that future generations of healthcare providers are equipped to be leaders in the profession, capable of delivering culturally competent and responsible care.

On a personal note, I have an 11th grade son and I am eager and excited for him to become the next generation of Bernsteins to grow from and give back to UConn and the State of Connecticut.